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Daily Highlights

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TUESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Secretary-General expresses shock at killing of Bosnian Foreign Minister, stressing need for greatest effort to resolve conflict; to report to Security Council on situation in former Yugoslavia.

+ UNPROFOR says 330 to 375 United Nations personnel are being held or restricted by Bosnian Serbs; reports sightings of Bosnian Serb troops wearing French uniforms.

+ Security Council extends UNDOF mandate until 30 November; says situation in Middle East will remain potentially dangerous until comprehensive settlement is reached.

+ Security Council, expressing concern about implementation of settlement plan for Western Sahara, decides to send mission to region; extends MINURSO mandate until 30 June.

+ United Nations sends disaster assessment and coordination team to Sakhalin to help evaluate humanitarian needs in wake of earthquake.

+ High-level Committee on Review of Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries begins ninth session at Headquarters.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has expressed deep shock and sadness at the death of Bosnian Foreign Minister Irfan Ljubjankic. Dr. Ljubjankic and his party were killed on Sunday, when the helicopter in which they were travelling was shot down near Bihac. The Secretary-General offered his condolences to the Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina and to the bereaved families. He said the deaths underscored the importance that all parties exercise the greatest effort to solve the Bosnian conflict.

The Secretary-General met yesterday with his senior advisers to discuss his latest report to the Security Council on the situation in the former Yugoslavia. They also discussed the situation on the ground in Bosnia and Herzegovina, with particular reference to the hostage situation. A new draft

of the report was being worked on today. Meanwhile, the Secretary-General was closely involved in high-level diplomatic activity aimed at obtaining the release of the United Nations personnel held hostage by the Bosnian Serbs.

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Some 330 to 375 United Nations personnel are currently being held or restricted by the Bosnian Serbs, a spokesman for the Organization announced today. He said the total varied from hour to hour as additional personnel were detained or others were released. Some were being held under guard, while others were surrounded and could not leave their posts, but were not in captivity.

The spokesman said 33 United Nations armoured personnel carriers and other vehicles had been stolen by the Bosnian Serbs. He noted that there had been three sightings of Bosnian Serbs wearing French uniforms and driving stolen French armoured personnel carriers.

Meanwhile, the Bosnian Serbs had deployed some heavy weapons in and around Sarajevo and had prepared three artillery positions at one weapons collection point. However, the situation in the city and elsewhere in Bosnia and Herzegovina was relatively quiet.

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The Security Council today extended the mandate of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) for six months to 30 November. The Force was established in 1974 to supervise the cease-fire and agreement on disengagement between Israel and Syria. The Council called on the parties to immediately implement resolution 338 (1973), which called for a just and durable peace settlement in the Middle East. It also asked the Secretary-General to report at the end of the mandate period on the development in the situation and the measures taken to implement that resolution. The Council took that action by unanimously adopting resolution 996 (1995).

In a complementary statement by its President, the Council said that despite the present quiet in the Israel-Syria sector, the situation in the Middle East continued to be potentially dangerous. It was likely to remain so, unless and until a comprehensive settlement covering all aspects of the Middle East problem could be reached.

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On Friday, the Council extended the mandate of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) until 30 June. It expressed concern about obstacles to further progress in the implementation of the settlement plan for Western Sahara, and said it was sending a mission to the region. The Council said it would consider a further extension of the mandate beyond 30 June based both on the report of its mission and the recent report of the Secretary-General. In that report, the Secretary-General requested a

(more)

four-month extension of MINURSO's mandate. The Council took that action by unanimously adopting resolution 995 (1995).

The Council underlined the need for the parties to work with MINURSO in a spirit of genuine cooperation. It reiterated its commitment to holding a free, fair and impartial referendum for self-determination of the people of Western Sahara in accordance with the settlement plan which had been accepted by the two parties.

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A United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination (UNDAC) team arrived today in Sakhalin, Russian Federation, which was hit by an earthquake over the weekend. At the request of the Russian authorities, the team will help evaluate humanitarian needs and, if necessary, coordinate assistance. A joint Department of Humanitarian Affairs/United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) environment unit is on standby to assist with regard to the ecological aspects of the disaster.

The Russian Ministry for Emergency Management has confirmed that the earthquake caused 218 deaths. It said that more than 500 people had been rescued from collapsed buildings and that more than 300 had been evacuated from the disaster area.

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The High-level Committee on the Review of Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries (TCDC) today began its ninth session at Headquarters. The Committee will discuss new directions for TCDC and institutional and funding arrangements to support them. It will also examine the suggestion that greater emphasis be placed on core development issues of special interest to a large number of developing countries.

The Committee will review progress made in implementing the Buenos Aires Plan of Action adopted at the United Nations Conference on TCDC in Argentina in 1978. Implementation of the Committee's previous decisions will also be examined. In addition, the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) will present specific proposals on measures the agency intends to take to further strengthen its support for TCDC.

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